

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – July 12, 2006
Historic Forks of the Wabash, Huntington, IN

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| Voting Members Present: Adams County - John Friedt Allen County – Paul McAfee DNR – Steve Morris Huntington County – Mike Mettler Huntington County – Dwight Ericsson (alternate) Knox County – Shane Cooper Miami County – Ken Einselen Posey County – Ralph Weinzapfel Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vermillion County – Mike Craig Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Wabash County – Ernest Passwater Warren County – Louise Jewell Wells County – Keith Huffman Wells County – Barbara Elliott (alternate) | Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy: Carroll County Cass County Parke County Non-Voting Members Present: DNR-DHPA Non-Voting Members Not Present IDEM INDOT Indiana Office of Tourism Commission and DNR Staff Present: Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director Karen Hanes – DNR Outdoor Recreation |
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CALL TO ORDER

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with self-introductions.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 10TH MEETING MINUTES

Norman (Lucky) Neiburger made a motion to approve the May 10th meeting minutes. Ernest Passwater seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

John G. reported on the June 3rd Wabash River Water Trail opening in Sullivan County.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ron James distributed the Executive Director’s Report (attached) for review. Highlights included his presenting to three county boards of commissioners, several water trail openings, two De-Trash the Wabash events, and the state ‘Trail Summit’. On inquiry by Louise Jewell, Ron elaborated that he, Steve Morris, Mercedes Brugh, Janet Fawley, Mike Mettler, and Keith Ruble attended the Trail Summit. The state was divided up into sections and the regional breakouts that included the Wabash River all had commission representation. In each of these regions, trails along the Wabash were given first priority. Steve Morris further explained the State Visionary Trails System.

FINANCE REPORT

Steve Morris distributed copies of the preliminary year end financial report for the commission. Steve stated that through June 30 the commission was appropriated \$97,850, with around \$7000 held back as mandatory 'reserve'. Commission expenditures totaled approximately \$88,000 so far. The mandatory reserve and other unspent funds revert back to the state general fund. Mike Mettler made a motion to approve the financial report. Keith Huffman seconded the motion and it carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Water Trail: Mike Mettler reported maps for Posey, Gibson, Cass and Carroll counties are almost complete, with three to go thereafter. Ken Einselen and Mercedes Brugh are working on approval to post the water trail signs on INDOT bridges. Ron James stated that water trail maps and grand opening dates are available on the commission website.

Education: Clayton Taylor of WFYI has collected the footage that did not make it into the recent documentary for use in our education project. There are several volunteers from WFYI and DNR, Project Wet that will be attending an Education Committee meeting, currently proposed for September, to organize toward a finished product.

John Gettinger reported that he judged the Discover the River 4-H projects in Terre Haute. John mentioned that the 'Sullivan County Banks of the Wabash' and 'Sullivan County Art Guild' are co-sponsoring a contest for people to paint pictures of the river.

Indiana Rivers Rally 2007: John Gettinger reported on the organizational meetings. Purdue University and the Rivers Institute will assume coordinating roles for the event. Rivers Rally will be along the Wabash, principally at Purdue University, in June of 2007. Sub-committees, such as program, sponsorship and marketing, will begin work soon.

Legislative: Each commission member reported on their progress with meeting with their legislators with the materials given them in May.

Budget: A proposed 2006-2007 commission budget was distributed. The executive committee proposed to increase the Executive Director's contract, unchanged for 4 years, by \$5000. Approval moved, Keith Huffman; Ken Einselen second. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

National Heritage Area Study

No new information on the proposed National Heritage Area Study has been received.

Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy

Ron James reported that, though he has two other assignments left to do, he finished his final project examining the factors for choosing between competing trail routes.

River Odyssey: Two Artists Follow the Wabash

Ron James reported the River Odyssey had a successful run in Indianapolis. It will open this month in New Harmony with 20 new paintings, available to purchase now, added. A concurrent exhibit will be on display at the Knox County Public Library in Vincennes.

Part of the exhibit will be in Logansport by the end of August and the entire collection will be in Wabash in September. The full schedule is listed on the commission website. In August 2007 the paintings will be auctioned off in Carmel, Indiana.

De-Trash the Wabash

The Tippecanoe De-Trash was flooded out in May so they cleaned only the banks and re-scheduled the De-Trash during RiverFest in July. Ron reported that Mt. Carmel, IL held its first De-Trash clean-up. Ron reminded members that Banks of the Wabash has safety equipment and supplies available, stored at the commission office, for De-Trash events.

Banks of the Wabash brochure & membership drive

John G. reminded the Commission that Banks of the Wabash has expanded the area it serves to include the entire Wabash River and wants to set up chapters in every county. The Sullivan County Chapter of Banks of the Wabash brochure was distributed.

Printer purchase

Steve Morris reported the printer was purchased and has been delivered.

NEW BUSINESS

Commission travel

Steve Morris reported that commission travel reimbursement now must take place via direct deposit. Steve made the appropriate form available to commission members.

Ralph Weinzapfel has confirmed the Sept. 13th meeting in New Harmony. Ron asked about expense reimbursement for members due to travel time. Steve Morris stated the commission's four hours travel policy was more restrictive than the state's policy. Steve thought the state reimburses for lodging with travel over 50 miles from your base of operation. John G. recommended the Commission follow the state guidelines for travel.

First purchase authorization for 2006-2007 budget

Ron J. inquired if the commission wants to purchase large bridge Water Trail signs. Ron agreed to get an estimate for 25, 4' X 6' signs. Ron listed other purchases to consider. Keith Huffman suggested a purchase to consider is a speaker phone for commission meetings so members could attend the meeting via conference call.

Norman (Lucky) N. moved the approval of a new contract with Ron James for executive director services in the amount of \$64,750. Keith Ruble seconded. The motion passed. Mike Mettler made a motion to give a \$25 donation to the Historic Forks of the Wabash museum. Norman (Lucky) Neiburger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Counties to be featured in the next *Reflections*

Articles for *Reflections* by Posey County (Ralph Weinzapfel), Miami County (Ken Einselen) and Fountain County (Connie Scheurich) are due to Ron by August 31.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. CDT, September 13, 2006 at Thrall's Opera House in New Harmony, IN.

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission

Executive Director's Report – 5/1/06 to 6/30/06 Submitted by Ron James

- ◆ Prepared agenda & other pre-meeting documents for 5/10/06 Commission Meeting
- ◆ Conceived, prepared & presented for video taping a presentation on the “Preparation of Persuasive Presentations” for use with the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy, module on Economic Benefits of Environmental Projects”.
- ◆ Finalized the legislative packets for each river commissioner with M. Brugh/ Legislative committee.
- ◆ Finalized & received solicited funds (w/ Banks of the Wabash) for De-Trash program – Tippecanoe
- ◆ Selected Rep/Senator contacts, prepared & distributed Legislative packets for each river commissioner
- ◆ Attended Commission Meeting 5/10/06, arranged Water Trail sign delivery to S. Cooper, Knox County
- ◆ Solicited and received support for Water Trail from Wabash County, Illinois/ Mt. Carmel
- ◆ Wrote articles, edited, finalized & sent “Reflections” for May 2006
- ◆ Attended “De-Trash the Wabash” organizational meeting 5/19/06 in Lafayette with report on fund raising.
- ◆ Organized & filed in Lafayette office on various occasions
- ◆ Finalized first Water Trail maps & arranged printing with Central Printing, State of IN
- ◆ Reviewed and aided the finalization and printing of Water Trail maps #2, 7, 5, and 8
- ◆ Prepared and organized for, final arrangements & phone conf. attendance – Banks of the Wabash meeting
- ◆ Prepared presentation of trail factors for choosing routes as final project for IN Watershed Leader Academy
- ◆ Traveled, attended & presented Final Project for Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy - Ft. Harrison
- ◆ Traveled to Lafayette to pick-up De-Trash equipment & transported, with Water Trail kiosks, to Mt. Carmel, IL.
- ◆ Traveled to Indy & Terre Haute to transport Water Trail maps & attend Water Trail Grand Opening in Vigo County
- ◆ Traveled to Indianapolis and attended State Trail Plan Summit at Indiana Government Center.
- ◆ Traveled to attend Mt. Carmel, IL., Water Trail dedication; then to Hutsonville, IL to photograph Water Trail posting.
- ◆ Traveled to Merom, IN., promoted Water Trail Grand Opening at Merom Bluff Chautauqua
- ◆ Attended Merom, IN & Hutsonville, IL. Water Trail Grand Openings – Crawford Co., IL, and Sullivan County, IN.
- ◆ Travel & attended Indiana Rivers Rally organizational meeting – Ft. Harrison, Indianapolis, on 6/5/06
- ◆ Travel & attend RiverFest organizational meetings in Lafayette, prep for Water Trail Grand Opening – Tippecanoe Co.
- ◆ Updated & began addresses review, update for River Odyssey mailings
- ◆ Prepared & sent correspondence in support of Corps of Engineers study of Wabash River in Tippecanoe Co. hydrology
- ◆ Traveled & presented to Wabash Co. Board of Commissioners and posted Water Trail in Wabash, IN., with Passwater
- ◆ Traveled & attended UWRBC meeting; met with Friedt & prepared to post Adams Co. Water Trail; delivered kiosks.
- ◆ Prepared first rough of proposed budget for 2006 – 2007, arranged Executive Meeting on Budget
- ◆ Traveled to Indianapolis & attended, w/ t/c, Exec. Comm.; Prepared Proposed Budget for Full Commission
- ◆ Traveled to Lafayette & Logansport; meetings with Nail (Tipp. Parks) and Brugh; Presented WRHCC Update to Cass Co. Board of Commissioners.
- ◆ Traveled and attended Annual Meeting of the Greater Fort Wayne Community Foundation
- ◆ Telephone conferences with Payne, W. Lafayette Parks re: Water Trail posting for Tippecanoe County Grand Opening.
- ◆ Travel & attend Public Meeting, Franke Park, Ft. Wayne on State Trail Plan; conference with Ray Irvin, InDOT
- ◆ Travel & attend public meetings on final Allen Co. Plan-It proposal.
- ◆ I reviewed minutes, prepared agenda, notices, reports, etc. for Commission meeting to be held 7/12/06.